

**California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley
Stanislaus County Public Forum
Turlock, CA – June 8, 2006**

Economic Work Group Panel

Jan Roberts – Frito Lay

- What is your assessment of the adopted scopes of work for the work groups?
 - The Economic Development Work Group should be comprised of local private industries.
 - The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership) should work with all the work groups to integrate all the ideas and strengthen the economic development opportunities.
 - Consolidate and streamline incentive programs for business:
 - It will help create new business opportunities for the San Joaquin Valley (Valley)
- What projects and programs will best utilize public dollars?
 - Transportation dollars should fund highway expansions, and a high speed rail system.
 - Quality of life amenities that will attract and keep a young workforce.
- What statutory changes would you recommend?
 - Streamline redundant regulations and policies that can impede the private sector from operating efficiently.
 - Provide incentives for those companies that provide stimulus and growth to the area.
- The top three priorities to the Valley:
 - Improve transportation infrastructure.
 - Incentives to industries which will provide economic vitality to the Valley.
 - Increase the visibility of success and accomplishments the Valley offers.
- What is the best structure of leadership for the Partnership to follow?
 - Continue forums such as the Partnership meetings.
 - Task public and private groups from all areas to drive each of the action proposals.
 - Collaborate and communicate all ideas to maintain the Partnership.

George Boodrookas – Dean, Community & Economic Development, Modesto Junior College

- The scope of work for the work group should focus on the Central Valley Higher Education Consortium.
- There should be a plan for a regional strategic plan for higher education.
- What projects will best utilize public dollars?
 - Fully fund and implement the Talent Strategies associated with the Department of Labor Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) proposal.

- Based on the Stanislaus County Economic Development and Workforce Alliance encourage and provide incentives for formal cooperation between workforce and economic development.
- Implement an industry cluster approach to workforce development.
- Implement a standardized assessment system based on WorkKeys.
- Align career and technical education with targeted industries.
- Fund and implement a region-wide business intelligence and data management tool.
- What statutory changes would you recommend?
 - Remove the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) system tracking requirements allowing for more participation among training opportunities at a lower cost per participant.
 - Alter the funding formula for vocational training programs in the California Community College system.
- The top three priorities for the Valley:
 - Develop a comprehensive, coordinated, demand-driven, customer-focused economic and workforce development system.
 - Establish the Valley as the state's leading producer of a full spectrum of health services professional from entry level to physicians.
 - Continue the momentum of the Partnership past November.
- What is the best plan for collaboration and cooperation?
 - Capitalize on the momentum of the Partnership and continue the cross agency and business collaborative to craft an organizational structure to provide ongoing guidance.

Vince Harris – Executive Director Stanislaus COG

- What is your assessment of the scope of work for the work groups?
 - The work scopes address many of the major issues facing the Valley.
 - The priorities seem to represent an appropriate approach for implementation by targeting economic improvement at the most basic level.
- What projects will best utilize public tax dollars?
 - Improving Highway 99 is the best way to spend tax dollars.
- What statutory recommendations would you make?
 - Pass a one half percent sales tax for transportation improvements:
 - It will provide funds for local streets and road maintenance.
- The top three priorities for the Valley:
 - Pass the half percent sales tax for transportation programs.
 - Maximize the use of sales tax revenues such that each transportation project is delivered on schedule.
 - Develop and maintain a Regional Transportation Plan that protects the environment while maintaining local roads.
- What is the best plan for collaboration and cooperation?
 - Relating to transportation, collaboration between the Valley officials and civic leaders is crucial.
 - The 8 Valley Councils of Governments should frequently collaborate.

Community Panel

Chris King – Stanislaus County of Education

- What is your assessment of the scope of work for the k-12?
 - Overall the scope is reflective of the problems.
 - The number one priority should be to engage the eight county superintendents of education around a set of state strategies to help improve low performing schools.
 - Success will come if there is an effective and coordinated system of action.
- What projects will best utilize public dollars?
 - Preparing students to attend college or technical school.
 - Funding to increase career/technical education.
- What statutory changes will improve the economic well-being of the Valley?
 - Relief from restrictive collective bargaining agreements such as contract language that restricts after school meetings, transfer policies, and limitations on classroom observations.
- The top three priorities for the Valley:
 - Increase college going rates.
 - Provide academic oversight.
 - Reduce dropouts.

Keith Boggs – Deputy Executive Officer – Economic Development, Stanislaus

- What is your assessment of the adopted scopes of work?
 - The technology work group presents an innovative vision that, if implemented, would increase utilization of technology and advanced communication services, particularly within very rural and low income populations.
- What projects will best utilize public dollars?
 - Requesting the California Emerging Technology Fund to adopt outreach and education components to help close the digital divide.
 - Legislation addressing the needs of rural areas in the Valley that are often in close proximity to urban /suburban development.
 - Recognizing that there is no one technology solution.
 - Develop a primer for use by local elected officials and their staff to better identify technology access.
- What statutory changes will improve the economic well-being of the Valley?
 - Promote changes in the existing Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure Grants Program (RTIGP).
- The top three priorities for the Valley:
 - Continuing dialogue by and between the valley communities – exploring best practice outreach and technology training successes.
 - Promote technology based community education efforts to teach rural Valley residents the possibilities and advantages of technology.
 - Continue to bring the rates for high-speed access down, so more people can access the technology.
- What organizational structure would you recommend?
 - Use the Great Valley Center to help promote the Partnerships plan.

Chief Roy Wasden – Modesto PD

- What is your assessment of the adopted scopes of work?
 - The work should include why the Valley is plagued with high dropout rates, violent crimes and gangs.
 - Find solutions or answers to drug addiction.
- What projects will best utilize public dollars?
 - Focus on programs that deal with gangs, dropouts and addiction.
- What statutory changes will improve the economic well-being of the Valley?
 - Focus on laws that affect drug users – if the addicts won't go to treatment, they need to be incarcerated.
- The top three priorities for the Valley:
 - Treatment for people addicted to substances.
 - Provide adequate resources and facilities to help those involved in crime.
 - Improvement of educational facilities and programs.
- What organizational structure would you recommend?
 - One that continually communicates and collaborates on solutions to the Valley's problems.

Carolina Bernal – Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

- What is your assessment if the adopted scopes of work?
 - The Valley has many problems and it remains to be seen if the work groups covers all issues.
- What projects best utilize public dollars?
 - The Hispanic Chamber is involved with the following projects and programs: Micro Loan, Monterrey Task Force, Nursing Project, Noche De Becas, Sister City Aguascalientes, Becoming Computer Literate, Chamber University, Growing an Entrepreneurial Spirit.
- What statutory changes do you recommend?
 - Change in sales tax for transportation.
 - Expand the working visa's to include medical professionals.
 - Quality of education is not equal at all schools – especially low income areas.
 - Equalize tax burdens for big and small businesses.
- The top three priorities for the Valley:
 - Education.
 - Health services.
 - Economic development and transportation.
- What organizational structure would you recommend?
 - The group needs to be reflective of the demographics of Stanislaus County.
 - Identify local leaders who will bring the concerns and practical solutions of the local neighborhood.

Rev. Michael Douglass – Advancing Vibrant Communities

- Use faith based community and community partnerships to provide a conduit for information to and from groups in need.

Business Panel

Mitch Etchebarne – Farm Bureau

- Land Use, Agriculture and Housing:
 - Housing for the Bay Area is taking agricultural land.
- Water Quality, Supply and Reliability:
 - Water quality must be balanced for urban and agricultural living.
 - Surface water storage needs to continue to the lead water issue.
- Air Quality:
 - Agricultural Conservation Management Plans have been successful and need to be recognized.
 - There needs to be funding for alternative disposal of agricultural waste because of the agricultural burning ban.
 - Diesel motor conversion to tier III engines needs to continue and funded through the Carl Moyer Program.
- Education is paramount for economic development:
 - Primary schools need to emphasize this importance.

Kevin Stone – Building Industry of California

- Economic Development:
 - Land should be entitled, partially developed and ready to go.
 - Match vocational training and education to the industries of the area.
- Transportation:
 - It is a key issue to the development of the Valley.
 - The Valley must speak with one voice on the issue.
- Land Use, Agriculture and Housing:
 - They fully support the proposed initiatives outlined by the work group.
- Technology and Advanced Telecommunications:
 - They fully support the proposed initiatives outlined by the work group.

Jan Ennenga – Manufacturers Council

- Air Quality and Environmental Protection:
 - Rather than requiring companies to continue to retrofit to control emissions, allow companies to find alternative sources for emissions control.
 - Retrofitting old systems becomes expensive and ineffective.
 - The standard for emission control should be established and the company should have the flexibility and freedom to establish their own emission control standards.
 - The Manufacturers Council agrees with supports the Air Quality Work Group's report.
 - Use incentives to encourage businesses to comply with regulations.

Pat Riddle – Food Processing Industry

- Water regulations need to be reevaluated:
 - This can be done through partnerships between the State and Industry.
 - There are more than agricultural groups using the water:
 - It is being used by food processing plants and high tech firms.

- Over restriction of water regulations will burden these industries:
 - It will also further burden the agricultural industry:
 - An industry that is being threatened by outside competitors.